

In the Claims

Please amend Claims 1, 3, 6, 11 and 18, as follows.

- 1 1. (Currently Amended). A hand extension ~~An athletic training device for blocking balls~~ use in
2 contacting a volleyball, comprising:
 - 3 a front layer intended to contact a ball;
 - 4 a pad having planar front layer and a rear layer, said pad being engineered for absorbing an
5 impact force imparted on ~~of said volleyball against~~ said front layer, said rear layer having a bottom
6 end portion and a top end portion that is offset from said bottom end portion with a substantial length
7 therebetween;
 - 8 an insert portion disposed between and secured to each of said front layer and said rear layer,
9 said insert portion being comprised of a relatively stiff material, and
 - 10 a hand receiving portion having a palm side ~~fixedly mated~~ secured to ~~said bottom end~~
11 ~~portion of said rear layer for utilizing said substantial length of said rear layer for reaching said ball,~~
12 said portion being shaped to receive a user's hand;
 - 13 wherein said pad has a rearward flexibility substantially similar to the natural backward
14 bending motion of a human hand.
 - 15 wherein at least said top end portion of said rear layer is deformable for substantially bending
16 rearward and absorbing said impact force of said ball, said top end portion for minimizing a
17 rotational force on the user's wrist via said hand receiving portion;
 - 18 — wherein said rotational force tends to cause rotation of the user's hand about the user's wrist.

1 2. (Cancelled).

1 3. (Currently Amended). The training device of claim 1, wherein said which further comprises an
2 insert portion between said front and rear layer [[is]] comprised of a plastic material.

1 4. (Previously Presented). The training device of claim 1, wherein said front layer and said rear
2 layer are comprised of a foam material.

1 5. (Original). The training device of claim 4, wherein said rear foam layer is thicker than said front
2 foam layer.

1 6. (Currently Amended). The training device of claim 1, wherein said insert portion is designed to
2 provide some flexibility, but is stiff enough to prevent the ball from consistently passing over or
3 through the training device flexible.

1 7. (Original). The training device of claim 1, wherein said insert portion is glued to said front layer
2 on one side and is glued to said rear layer on the other side.

1 8. (Original). The training device of claim 4, further comprising:
2 a covering surrounding said front foam layer, said insert portion, and said rear foam layer.

1 9. (Original). The training device of claim 8, wherein said covering is comprised of a fabric

2 material.

1 10. (Original). The training device of claim 1, wherein said hand receiving portion is configured
2 in the shape of a glove.

1 11. (Currently Amended). A ~~volleyball blocking pad~~ for blocking a volleyball, comprising:

2 a foam portion;

3 a relatively stiff planar portion disposed in said foam portion;

4 an outer covering encapsulating said foam portion, said outer cover having a rear side with
5 a bottom end portion and a top end portion that is offset a substantial distance from said bottom end
6 portion; and

7 a hand-receiving portion having a palm side fixedly mated to said bottom end portion for
8 utilizing said top end portion for blocking ~~a ball~~ said volleyball;

9 wherein at least said top end portion of said rear layer is deformable for substantially bending
10 rearwardly and decreasing an impact force of said ~~ball~~ so as to decrease a rotational force applied
11 to the user's wrist volleyball;

12 wherein said hand-receiving portion has a front palm side that is fixedly mated to said bottom
13 end portion for directing a user's palm toward said front layer;

14 wherein said rotational force tends to cause rotation of the user's hand about the user's wrist;

15 wherein said hand-receiving portion is sized smaller than said foam portion and said stiff
16 portion.

1 12. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said foam portion is comprised of a front
2 foam portion and a rear foam portion.

1 13. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 12, wherein said relatively stiff portion is disposed
2 between said front foam portion and said rear foam portion.

1 14. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 12, wherein said front foam portion is thinner than said
2 rear foam portion.

1 15. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said relatively stiff portion is comprised of
2 a plastic material that also provides some flexibility.

1 16. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said outer covering is removable.

1 17. (Original). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said hand receiving portion is configured in
2 the shape of a glove.

1 18. (Currently Amended). A ~~volleyball~~ blocking pad for blocking a volleyball, comprising:
2 an absorbing portion for absorbing some force of a ~~contacting~~ said volleyball, said absorbing
3 portion having a top end portion and a bottom end portion that is offset a substantial length from said
4 top end portion for reaching said contacting volleyball;
5 a relatively stiff planar portion in communication with said absorbing portion to allow said

6 blocking pad to block said ~~contacting~~-volleyball, but still flex backward with respect to a user's
7 hand; and

8 a hand receiving portion ~~in communication therewith~~ for receipt of said user's hand therein,
9 said hand receiving portion having a front palm side that is fixedly coupled to said bottom end
10 portion of said absorbing portion for directing a user's palm toward said absorbing portion, said hand
11 receiving portion including a plurality of sleeves for receiving a plurality of fingers;
12 whereby said hand receiving portion extends from said bottom end portion of said rear side.

1 19. (Previously Presented). The athletic training device of claim 1, wherein said hand receiving
2 portion has a plurality of sleeves for receiving a plurality of fingers.

1 20. (Previously Presented). The athletic training device of claim 1, wherein said hand-receiving
2 portion has a front palm side that is fixedly mated to said bottom end portion for directing a user's
3 palm toward said front layer.

1 21. (Previously Presented). The blocking pad of claim 11, wherein said hand receiving portion has
2 a plurality of sleeves for receiving a plurality of fingers.